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ABSTRACT

Findings from a study that examined stresses associated with the role of the university department chair are presented in this paper. The focuses are on career paths, transitions to the chair position, commitment to administration, role orientation, and strains of chairing. A survey of 808 department chairs in 101 research and doctoral-granting U.S. colleges and universities yielded 564 responses, a 70 percent return rate. Findings indicate that stress was primarily associated with time management, collegial confrontation, organizational constraints, and academic productivity. Suggestions for reducing stress in each area are offered, some of which include: identifying high and low payoff activities; facilitating faculty involvement in conflict resolution; establishing a research protection plan; and using creativity in interpreting regulations. Five tables are included. (29 references) (LMI)

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THE COST OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP
DEPARTMENT CHAIR STRESS

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THE COST OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP: DEPARTMENT CHAIR STRESS

INTRODUCTION

The university department chair represents one of the most complex, elusive, and intriguing positions. It is unique, without common management parallels, and equally important providing the critical link between the administrative requirements of the university and the faculty values of the academic departments. Despite the unique and important role chairs play in universities, few researchers have ventured to study this multi-dimensional position. The attention it has received in the literature in the past ten years has been mostly anecdotal.

The complexity of the department chair role results from attempting to bridge the managerial and academic cores of the university, which are organized and operated differently (Bare, 1964). The academic core of teaching and research operates freely and independently in a loosely-coupled system, whereas the managerial core maintains the mechanistic qualities of a tightly-coupled organization. The department chair is at the heart of the tension between the two systems. While this dynamic tension between administration and academia is critical in order to maintain higher education institutions (Seedorf, 1990), it does place the department chair in a difficult position to mediate the demands of administration and concerns of faculty. In effect, the position is like that of the Roman god Janus, with faces oriented in opposite directions, or what others have referred to as a "swivel" effect, not knowing which way to turn.

Thus, chairs are trapped between the stresses and pressures of performing not only as an administrator but faculty member as well. An investigation of department chair stress should reflect this duality of pressure. In the Spring of 1990 the UCEA Center for the Study of the Department Chair at Washington State University conducted a comprehensive survey of 808 department chairs in over 100 research and doctoral granting colleges and universities across the United States. The purpose was to expand the theoretical and practical understanding of department chairs by exploring their career paths, transitions to the chair position, their commitment to administration, role orientation, and the stresses and strains of chairing. This article focuses on stresses associated with the role of department chair.

Stress and the Department Chair

A few studies of administrator stress in higher education have been conducted. Blackburn and colleagues (1986), examined faculty and administrator job strain and its impact on "quality of life" indicators. They found a significant association between job strain and the administrators' satisfaction with their supervisor. Rasch and her associates (1986), administered the University Administrative Concerns Questionnaire (UACQ), adapted from the Administrative Stress Index (ASI) developed from a study of public school administrators (Gmelch and Swent, 1984) to identify and measure various types of stress encountered by administrators in higher education. While they confirmed, by factor analysis, the dimensions of "role based," "task based," and "conflict mediating" stress discovered in the study of public school administrators (Koch, Tung, Gmelch and Swent, 1982), they were not able to assess the

dual role pressure experienced by department chairs. Their assessment instrument only investigated the administrative core stressors from the ASI. Thus, the generalizability of the results to identifying department chair stress is limited.

Therefore, occupational stress associated with the dual administrator-faculty role of the academic department chair has not been investigated. Since the position of department chair has been identified as key in the administration of today's colleges and universities (Creswell, 1986; Singleton, 1987; Staton-Spicer and Spicer, 1987), the pressures on academic department chair provide a fertile area for research.

The need to understand the chair is accentuated by the fact that role ambiguity results in low job satisfaction, increased tension and anxiety, and a propensity to leave an administrative position (Singleton, 1987). This is supported by Carroll's research which shows that 66% of department chairs return to faculty status after their tenure as chair and only one in five chairs continue in higher education administration (1990).

In summary, the contribution of role conflict and role ambiguity to the occupational stress associated with the chair position has been reviewed and discussed (Blackburn et al, 1986; Carlton and Bennett, 1980; Gmelch and Seedorf, 1989; Lee, 1985; Milstein, 1990; Rasch, et al, 1986; Simpson, 1984; Singleton, 1987; Staton-Spicer and Spicer, 1987). It is clear that the chair position presents conflicting administrator-faculty expectations and stresses on the department chair.

Given the above conditions, the present study sought to achieve the following objectives:

(I) Identify job situations perceived by university department chairs to be stressful;

(2) Compare the sources of stress experienced by department chairs with faculty members;

(3) Investigate the associations of personal and professional characteristics with department chair stress; and

(4) Suggest how department chairs can cope with the pressures of their position.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Construct

The basic theoretical construct of stress underlying our investigation is that stress is the result of the respondent's interpretation of stimuli and other events in their environment. McGrath (1976) hypothesized a broadly accepted sequence of events depicting the stress process, which was further elaborated into a four-stage stress cycle for faculty (Gmelch, 1987). *Stage I* is concerned with the identification of stressors present in or because of the environment. These stressors can include excessive meetings, frequent interruptions, confrontation with colleagues. The individual's perception (Stage II) of the demands determines the degree to which stress is experienced. The individual's stress response is *Stage III* of the stress cycle. Greater stress is associated with limited resources to meet the demands of the stressor. Whether an individual is able to generate the resources to meet these demands is part of the stress response. To complete the stress cycle, *Stage IV* is termed the consequences of the response to stress. Often this stage is associated with long-term negative effects.

This construct has been used in other studies (Gmelch et al. 1984, 1986; Perlberg and Kainan, 1986; Rasch et al., 1987). The essential notion of the theoretical construct common to these studies is that stress is determined by "One's anticipation of his or her inability to respond (Stage III) adequately to a perceived (Stage II) demand (Stage I), accompanied by the anticipation of negative consequences (Stage IV) due to an inadequate response" (Gmelch, 1982, p. 2). This study examined department chairs' identification of perceived occupational demands (Stages I and II) in their environment.

Instrument Development

The instrument developed to measure the sources of chair stress evolved through a series of iterations designed to insure that relevant facets of department chair job-related strain were explored. To accommodate the administration-faculty dual role of chairs, the most significant items were selected from the Administrative Stress Index (Gmelch and Swent, 1984) and Faculty Stress Index (Gmelch, Lovrich and Wilke, 1984), previously developed and validated using samples of 1160 administrators and 1260 faculty members, respectively.

In addition, 30 administrators were asked to keep stress logs for a period of two weeks. They recorded, on a daily basis, the most stressful single event, the most stressful series of events and, at the end of each week, other common stressors that normally occur but had not occurred during that particular week. These diaries were content-analyzed and items which were frequently mentioned, or which were regarded as particularly stressful, were included in the initial chair stress instrument. Like the original FSI and ASI, a five-point Likert-type scale

was used, ranging from slightly stressful (1), through moderately stressful (3), to excessively stressful (5), Finally, a pilot study of 90 academic chairs was conducted at an American land grant, comprehensive university to test the validity of the items (Gmelch & Wilke, 1991).

The 22 department chair stress-related items composed the Department Chair Stress Index (DCSI) and were part of the National Survey of Department Chairs in Higher Education conducted by the UCEA Center for the Study of the Department Chair at Washington State University.

Population and Sample

All Research I and II and Doctorate Granting I and II type institutions as classified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education were designated as the target population. Of these 213 institutions, 101 were randomly selected for the sample. Eight department chairs were selected from each institution, stratified by Biglan's classification of disciplines into a tridimensional model clustering departments into eight cells by hard vs soft, applied vs pure, and life vs nonlife (Biglan, 1973). Thus, 808 department chairs were sampled for the study of which 564 usable surveys were returned, representing a 70.2% response rate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Common Causes of Chair Stress

The assumption of serious stress status was made from responses to the 22 chair-related items on the Likert-type scale, anchored at one end with "slight stress" (1) and anchored at the other with "excessive pressure" (5). Those chairs who indicated a 4 or 5 response were deemed as experiencing serious stress resulting from that particular work circumstance. The stressors identified by 40% or more of the department

chairs as *serious* are listed in Table 1, e.g. almost three out of every five department chairs (59%) complained that *having too heavy a work load* (ranked #1) caused serious job stress. Table I reveals that 13 of the 22 stressors from the Department Chair Stress Index (DCSI) met the criterion of 40% or more of the chairs experiencing serious stress.

A perusal of the list of 13 stressors causing serious concern among over 40% of the department chairs shows four themes emerging. Six of the top stressors relate to chairs' difficulty in dealing with *time pressures*: "too heavy a workload" (59.1%, ranked #1), "completing paperwork on time" (41%, ranked #10), "meetings taking too much time" (40.1%, ranked #12), "telephone and visitor interruptions" (40.5%, ranked #13), "excessively high self-expectations" (45.2%, ranked #7), and the "job interfering with personal time" (47.9%, ranked #5).

A second theme emergent from three items deals with *confrontation with colleagues*: "evaluating faculty performance" (42%, ranked #9), "making decisions affecting their lives" (46.1%, ranked #6), and "resolving collegial differences" (45.1%, ranked #8). Two other items reflect the third theme, *organizational constraints* in terms of "complying with institutional rules and regulations" (48.2%, ranked #4) and "obtaining program approval and financial support" (54%, ranked #2).

Finally, the department chairs appear to be caught between the common managerial stress themes of time, conflict and organizational constraints along with the regular *faculty pressures* of "keeping current in their discipline" (53.2%, ranked #3) and "preparing manuscripts and presentations" (40.9%, ranked #11). Surprisingly, chairs in the same survey disclosed their greatest dissatisfaction was caused by having less time for "research" and "remaining current in their field", followed by loss

Table 1

Stressors Identified by 40% or More of the Chairs as Serious

Rank	Stressors	% Indicating Serious Source of Stress[1]
1.	Having too heavy work load	59.1%
2.	Obtaining program/financial approval	54.0%
3.	Keeping current in my discipline	53.2%
4.	Complying with institutional rules	48.2%
5.	Job interfering with personal time	47.9%
6.	Making decisions affecting others	46.1%
7.	Excessively high self expectations	45.2%
8.	Resolving collegial differences	45.1%
9.	Evaluating faculty performance	42.0%
10.	Completing paperwork on time	41.0%
11.	Preparing manuscripts/presentations	40.9%
12.	Meetings taking too much time	40.1%
13.	Telephone and visitor interruptions	40.5%
**	General level of job stress	43.8%

1 Percent "serious" determined to be a response in the 4 and 5 categories on a five-point Likert-type scale from "slight pressure (1) to "excessive pressure" (5).

of time for "leisure, family, and friends" (Seedorf, 1990). Thus, chairs are trapped between the pressures and demands of performing not only as an administrator, but also as a productive faculty member.

The dual pressure of the chair position is reconfirmed when comparing the most serious stressors of chairs with those of faculty. Table 2 contrasts the present National Study of Department Chairs with the National Stress Study of Professors (Gmelch et al., 1984), each conducted from comparable samples from the population of 213 Research I and II Doctorate Granting I and II universities in the United States. Note that not only do chairs identify seven of the professors' most serious stressors in their own list of serious stressors, but the percent of chairs suffering from these stressors is higher in each case except for "excessively high self-expectations", which is typically more troublesome for staff-type positions (faculty) than line-management positions (department chairs). In addition, chairs also indicated serious stress from the unique managerial stressors of "obtaining program and financial approval," "complying with rules and regulations," "completing paperwork on time," "resolving collegial differences," and "making decisions affecting lives of others," which were not high stressors for faculty. This paradoxical situation of trying to fill a "swivel" position causes department chairs to feel double pressure to be an effective manager and productive faculty member.

Professional and Personal Characteristics

Now that these serious stress items of department chairs have been identified, it becomes possible to investigate the degree to which professional and personal characteristics relate to these stressors. Table

Table 2
National Comparison of Most Serious Stressors of
Department Chairs and Professors

Stressors	National Survey of Dept. Chairs N=564 Rank	% Serious Stress	National Survey of Professors N=1221 Rank	% Serious Stress
Having too heavy work load	1	59%	5.5	40%
Obtaining program/financial approval	2	54%	N/A	N/A
Keeping current in my discipline	3	53%	3	49%
Complying with institutional rules	4	48%	-	-
Job interfering with personal time	5	47%	7	35%
Making decisions affecting others	6	46%	-	-
Excessively high self expectations	7	45%	1	53%
Resolving collegial differences	8	45%	-	-
Evaluating faculty performance	9	42%	N/A	N/A
Completing paperwork on time	10	41%	-	-
Preparing manuscripts/presentations	11	40%	5.5	40%
Telephone and visitor interruptions	12	40%	9.5	33%
Meetings taking too much time	13	40%	9.5	33%

1 See table 2, pg 484 in Gmelch, WH, Wilke, P.K. and Lovrich, P.(1984). Stress in academe: A national perspective. Research in Higher Education,

NA=Item "not applicable" to professors, not included in the Faculty Stress Index.

3 sets forth the first such comparison with respect to the professional characteristic of discipline. Smart and Elton (1976) hypothesized that role behaviors learned by department chairs vary according to the expected norms of their respective academic disciplines, and furthermore, their research demonstrated how Biglan's (1973) model of academic disciplines can be used to identify variations in the role behavior patterns of department chairs. Recent work based on Biglan's model (Creswell and Roskins, 1981) also suggests the potential utility of investigating discipline-based variation in several areas including stress (Gmelch, Wilke and Lovrich, 1986).

Each of the department chairs was questioned with regard to his or her academic discipline, and subsequently each discipline was categorized into one of the eight Biglan categories reflecting "hard" and "soft" sciences, "pure" and "applied" orientations, and "life" and "nonlife" subject matter. This study, as reflected in Table 3, shows that there is far more similarity than difference in the way chairs from across academia view the sources of stress in their work. Of the 104 possible comparisons, only two proved distinctive at the .95 level of confidence, both in the soft-applied-life (Educational Administration) discipline. This result is consistent with a study of faculty stress which concluded that the dimension of stress is predominantly similar among faculty, regardless of disciplinary differences (Gmelch, Lovrich, and Wilke, 1984), even though studies by Biglan (1973) and Wilke (1983) have indicated that faculty in different disciplines report differing levels of commitment to, preference for, and amount of time and stress in their areas of responsibilities.

Another important professional characteristic is the orientation of department chairs towards administration or faculty status. Higher

Table 3

A Comparison of the Most Serious[1] Stressors Across Disciplinary Categories by Percent

Rank	Stressors	Academic Disciplines[2]							
		All Chairs N=555	HPL N=62	HPN N=75	HAL N=65	HAN N=64	SPL N=68	SPN N=79	SAL N=70	SAN N=72
1.	Having too heavy work load	59.1%	53.2	72.4	66.2	62.5	52.2	54.4	52.1	59.7
2.	Obtaining program/financial approval	54.0%	56.5	66.7	60.0	51.6	43.4	52.5	47.1	54.2
3.	Keeping current in my discipline	53.2%	56.5	68.4	53.9	44.4	59.4	41.3	50.7	51.4
4.	Complying with institutional rules	48.2%	46.8	43.4	41.5	56.3	52.2	43.8	47.1	55.6
5.	Job interfering with personal time	47.9%	45.2	40.8	58.5	45.3	49.3	50.0	34.3	59.7
6.	Making decisions affecting others	46.1%	46.8	46.1	52.3	41.3	44.9	51.3	**32.9**	52.8
7.	Excessively high self expectations	45.2%	40.3	41.3	60.0	51.6	33.8	49.4	48.6	37.5
8.	Resolving collegial differences	45.1%	37.1	52.6	49.2	38.1	49.3	50.6	39.4	41.7
9.	Evaluating faculty performance	42.0%	41.9	37.3	49.2	36.5	39.1	46.3	33.8	51.4
10.	Completing paperwork on time	41.0%	32.3	50.0	50.1	37.5	39.1	32.5	38.0	47.9
11.	Preparing manuscripts/presentations	40.9%	41.9	39.4	46.2	31.3	47.0	36.4	47.1	43.1
12.	Telephone and visitor interruptions	40.5%	35.4	35.6	43.1	44.4	36.2	39.2	**51.4**	36.1
13.	Meetings taking too much time	40.1%	37.1	44.7	46.2	35.9	40.6	30.0	42.9	47.2

1 Percent "serious" determined to be a response in the 4 and 5 categories on a five-point Likert-type scale from "slight pressure (1) to "excessive pressure" (5).

2 Bold entries represent figures differently from "all chairs" Proportions at .95 confidence level.

education scholars have stated that chairs vacillate between faculty and administration with one foot in each camp and shift their weight from one foot to the other depending on the situation. With this ambiguous role in mind, department chairs were asked to indicate their best sense of their usual orientation on a continuum from faculty oriented (1) to administration oriented (7). As noted in Table 4, almost three of every five chairs (58.7%) had a stronger orientation to faculty than administration (22.6%). Most chairs across the Biglan categories of discipline indicated similar orientation except the soft-applied-life (SAL) chairs of educational administration which showed twice the magnitude toward administrative orientation (44.3%) than the average of all chairs.

Upon further investigation, when mean stress scores are compared between "faculty oriented" chairs and "administration oriented" chairs (Table 5), four stressors and the overall stress level are significantly more stressful for the "administration oriented" chairs. Three of the items relate to the theme of confrontation with colleagues with the other reflecting excessively high self-expectations. However, the "chair orientation" relation to stress items showed no significant association with the stress from time pressure, organizational constraints, and, ironically, faculty scholarship.

When the department chair stress data were analyzed for differences in personal characteristics (gender and age), again stressors proved to be more universal among all chairs than unique. Only one stressor was significantly more stressful for female chairs than male: *job demands interfering with personal time.* This is contrary to the faculty stress research which reflected significantly more variation

Table 4

Percent Department Chairs Indicating Role Orientation

Orientation/Discipline	HPL	HPN	HAL	HAN	SPL	SPN	SAL	SAN	Total
Faculty	64.51%	69.33%	52.38	41.26	78.25	61.04	35.72	64.39	58.69%
Neutral	17.74%	18.67%	20.63	23.81	11.59	20.78	20.00	16.44	18.66%
Administration	17.75%	12.00%	26.00	34.92	10.75%	18.19%	44.39%	19.18%	22.64%
Total %	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Number	62	75	63	63	69	77	70	73	552

1 Categories as Faculty, Neutral and Administration were decided on the basis of their self report orientation from Faculty (1) to Administration (7). This table reflects Faculty (1-3), Neutral (4), and Administration (5-7).

Table 5

Comparison of Chairs' Orientation and Mean Scores
on Most Serious Stressors

Stressors	Faculty Oriented Mean Stress Score	Administration Oriented Mean Stress Score
Having too heavy work load	3.64	3.76
Obtaining program/financial approval	3.50	3.56
Keeping current in my discipline	3.46	3.38
Complying with institutional rules	3.37	3.33
Job interfering with personal time	3.40	3.52
Making decisions affecting others	3.15	3.40*
Excessively high self expectations	3.22	3.60**
Resolving collegial differences	3.12	3.68****
Evaluating faculty performance	3.05	3.43**
Completing paperwork on time	3.19	3.40
Preparing manuscripts/presentations	3.17	3.29
Telephone and visitor interruptions	3.20	3.23
Meetings taking too much time	3.11	3.20
General level of job stress	3.24	3.48*

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; p<.0001

Chair orientation was self reported from (1)Faculty to (7)Administration: Faculty orientation reflects 1-3 and Administrator orientation 5-7.

between men and women (Koester and Clark, 1980). However, one should not overlook this singular significant finding since married women academics not only have the duai demands of management and the professoriate, but typically carry the burden of pressure for personal time more than their male counterparts (Gmelch, et al., 1986).

Pearson product moment correlations between age and serious stressors revealed a slightly negative association on 10 of the 13 stressors (ranging from -.011 to -.168) and slightly positive on three stressors (.056 to .103). The most significantly correlated stress item with age was "general level of job stress" which showed a negative correlation of -.210; thus younger chairs were more stress than older. While none of the correlations could be considered significant, the direction of the association (as age increases, stress declines) is consistent with general stress theory and the findings of previous researchers. The lack of significant correlations between age and stress (compared to those reported in studies of faculty stress), could be due to the small variation in ages of department chairs in this study.

While researchers are often discouraged at finding no significant differences from their data, the results of the tests for associations between personal and professional characteristics and stress from this study serves to underscore the monolithic nature of the stress experienced by department chairs. Possibly the magnitude of the complexity of the department chair role supersedes any demographic differences between and among chairs, in spite of what has been shown in previous studies of professors of higher education. The argument for universal stress training for department chairs is a voice difficult to dispute.

Practical Implications: Coping with the Pressures

The majority of top stressors from this study emanate from time pressures, while other strains come from confrontation with faculty, administrative constraints, and maintaining faculty scholarship. Clearly some of these problems are more manageable than others. Most chairs would agree that while they could become better managers of their time, the other factors are more difficult to remediate.

No amount of research can provide the solitary answer on how to cope with these problems. Even the foremost authority on stress, Hans Selye (1975), contends that despite everything that has been written and said about stress and coping, no ready-made formulas suit everyone. While the following suggestions do not emanate from the research data, they do provide strategies for attacking the general factors of department chair stress found in the study.

Managing Management Time. The paperwork, meetings, interruptions, and workload represent not the *ends* of managerial and academic productivity but the *means* to the important goals in higher education. It is particularly ironic that institutions of higher learning often treat their most important resources as either ineducable or self-sufficient in managerial needs once the Ph.D. or department chair position has been bestowed. Department chair training is virtually non-existent. Such training needs as time management could provide a great boost to both chair morale and productivity. A few of the basic time management principles to be reinforced are:

1. Assist chairs identify high pay-off (HIPOS) activities to help them attain excellence in both their management and faculty responsibilities.

2. At the same time reduce the involvement of chairs in less meaningful, low pay-off (LOPOS) processes by cutting back excessive meetings, committee work, and general administrivia.

3. Provide chairs with a more efficient working environment so that routine paperwork can be handled by office assistants; telephone calls can be screened; time can be blocked into uninterruptable periods for productive, thoughtful work; and, if possible, chairs can retreat to a HIPO hideout for preparing manuscripts and keeping up with their discipline.

4. Assist chairs in developing self-management techniques, particularly in planning and organization, so the *right* things get done, rather than just getting things done.

Productive Conflict Resolution. Confronting their faculty colleagues represents the second most bothersome area for department chairs. Since chairs also consider themselves as faculty, the responsibility of evaluating their peers, making decisions affecting faculty lives, and finding themselves in conflict with their faculty colleagues causes a over 40 percent of the chairs high stress. It is interesting to note that the stress does not necessarily emanate from conflict per se; two other items dealing with conflict on the survey do not cause serious stress "resolving differences with superiors" and "resolving differences with students" seriously afflicted only 17% and 5% of the chairs, respectively). Therefore, the nature of the conflict with faculty is not as much in the connotation of *conflict* as it is in the word *faculty--confronting peers.*

A few reminders may be helpful in assisting chairs work with their colleagues:

1. Chairs, too, were once faculty--voted into their position by colleagues to champion faculty values more than enforce administrative directives.

2. The power of the chair does not rest as much in the *position* (power of reward and punishment) as it does in the *person* (influence by referent, expertise, and collegiality).

3. When caught between the demands of administration and the needs of faculty, chairs should explore common interests that transcend and satisfy both parties.

4. The operative managerial word for supervision of colleagues is not direct, but facilitate. Chairs should work on getting faculty involved and having them buy into the solutions.

Enabling Constraints. While rules and regulations restrict chairs' flexibility and cause unwanted stress, chairs should not be discouraged by rules alone. They merely represent boundaries around a *pasture* within which the department can operate. Faculty members want the chair to understand the boundaries and be creative on how to reach goals and objectives while staying within the *pasture*. Chairs who merely recite the policy manual in response to faculty requests, and do not use creativity in trying to solve problems, abdicate management judgement and prerogative to the constraints of the organization.

Academic Productivity. This study reveals that department chairs experience more stress from trying to keep current in their discipline and preparing manuscripts for publication than do faculty members. In essence, department chairs have become role prisoners of

both faculty productivity pressures and administrative leadership challenges. Over two-thirds of the current department chairs in the study indicated that they will return to faculty status after serving their term as department chair (Carroll, 1990). If so, they should protect their time and resources to maintain their research agenda. Listed below are a few suggestions for a research protection plan.

1. Block uninterrupted periods of time to engage in thoughtful scholarly activities.

2. Maintain another office on campus or at home to ensure that a half to a full day a week, or two hours each morning can be devoted to other professional responsibilities.

3. Establish a research or writing team of faculty members or graduate students to work with the chair on his or her research agenda. Altruistic chairs will be less reluctant to cancel shared research time than time for themselves.

4. If an extended term of service in the chair position is anticipated, negotiate a sabbatical between terms or at the end of the term to regain currency in the discipline.

Any approach to reducing chair stress rests both with the chair's willingness to seek creative solutions and the university's responsiveness to develop effective and productive leadership. While the future for academic leadership may appear plagued with stress, it is also replete with challenges. The cost of academic leadership must be understood by those interested in taking on these challenges.

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